

FLORIDA'S GREAT PROBLEM

WILL WEST FLORIDA BE ALLOWED TO SEcede?

That Part of the State Wants to Join Alabama and the Matter Is to Come Up Over the Question of Moving the Capital from Tallahassee to Jacksonville.

NEW ORLEANS, Nov. 9.—Florida is just now discussing a political question which interests the entire Union and deeply affects the relations of the States. It has never come up before in exactly the present form. The secession of Vermont from New York and that of West Virginia from Virginia were somewhat similar cases, but there are important differences. In Florida, the case is presented of a large part of the State, which is politically known as "West Florida," proposing to secede from the Union, to become a part of Alabama, and to have the capital of the new State located at Jacksonville.

The proposed secession of West Florida is also mixed up with the proposed change of the State capital from Tallahassee to Jacksonville. Tallahassee, an insignificant town, which has not advanced for half a century, was chosen, like most of the other Southern capitals, because of its central location. The old State House is no longer suited to the needs of the State. It is a question whether the new capital be built at some other central point, or at Jacksonville. Since that town was selected as the seat of administration of Florida, a great change has taken place in the North, has poured into eastern and southern Florida. The great bulk of the population is now in and around Jacksonville and through the orange belt. West Florida, which is a lumber country, has become a far less important element in the population and wealth of the State. It is a question whether it will be followed by giving up of the United States Senators to west and the east Florida. Taking advantage of its increase in population and voting strength, east Florida now proposes to move the capital to Jacksonville. If this is done, West Florida, which will be removed from the political center of the State, proposes to secede and become annexed to Alabama, with which State it is connected geographically, commercially and socially. The secession sentiment in west Florida has been strong for twenty years, and has been held under control only by the fact that Tallahassee is about equally distant from the two sections, is the State capital, in the contest for the State capital there are several competitors—Jacksonville, the largest city in Florida, Tallahassee, the present capital, Ocala and Gainesville.

The condition of affairs in Florida is the result of a number of historical and geographical factors.

Long Looked Upon as a Nuisance, the Plant Is Found to Be Valuable.

From the Savannah Morning News.

The saw palmetto, or "sabal serrulata," as the scientists call it, is indigenous to the soil of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana, in the tidal section of the coast, and grows in a very hardy and vigorous growth. Once its roots are set in a soil they can be removed only by the most industrious and thorough scrubbing. In many places the palmetto scrub covers whole tracts of many acres with an almost impenetrable barrier of tangled growth.

Until within the very recent past the saw palmetto has been looked upon as an unmitigated nuisance. The cost of clearing an acre of land of the growth was often much greater than the price of a dozen acres of the rough, scrubby land. It has been discovered that the saw palmetto is both a source of health and of wealth, and the probabilities are that at a day not far in the future it will be adding largely to the prosperity of these sections which formerly cut it down and cast it into the fire.

The roots are rich in tannic acid. Several factories in Florida and other places are already engaged in the manufacture of leather tanned with acid from the palmetto. It is said to be equal in quality to the best oak or hemlock-tanned stock. As the palmetto costs hardly more than the gathering, acid from it can be produced at less cost than from any other source. The market for it, therefore, is safe. For manufacturing sugar from it, it would seem that there ought to be a great field for the palmetto. It was extensively made use of during the war of secession by the women of the South in making sugar articles, and it is still used in the same way.

One of the most important uses for which the saw palmetto is available, however, is in the manufacture of paper. It is a very valuable in the treatment of kidney and other troubles, and various proprietary medicines manufactured from the saw palmetto are now finding their way into the markets.

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PRIZE HOG'S WATERLOO.

THE COMBINATION SNAKE RUNG IN ON A SERPENT DESTROYER.

Eben Brown's Wrath Against Tom Wilson and Craving for Revenge—The Learned Pig and Its Last Match—Confusing Effect of Rattles Grafted on a Blacksnake.

Eben Brown never forgave Tom Wilson for deciding against him in the great Pike county ducking snake race. said Deacon Todgers, when the boys asked him for a tale of life in the old Pike county days.

"I'm a good man, and a forgiving," said Eben earnestly the day after the race, "but I'll get even with Tom Wilson, if I develop premature baldness trying to think up some scheme. And when I strike I will aim at his tenderest part."

"There isn't but one thing for a snake to do when my hog comes in sight," Tom used to say. "I'll strike him on his back, and that is to be committed suicide. For if he lingers on the premises he will only meet with a painful death, and add to the laurels of that noble animal of mine and his worthy owner."

"A hog's a hog," said Eben sort of contemptuously. "Even when he has a talkative tongue, he is an animal of talents. I don't deny that your pet can fumble about with blocks and debris, strangers into believing he can sail. But when it comes to killing snakes, I don't think he is on hand with many claims for heroism."

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THE MORALITY OF POKER.

OLD MAN GREENHUT DEFENDS HIS FAVORITE GAME.

His Story of a Game on the Prairie Belle, After Which the Loser Borrowed a Gun From the Winner and Made His Exit Under the Paddlewheel—Some Criticisms Answered.

Folks often say that playin' poker is immoral, an' tends toward a hardenin' of the heart," said old man Greenhut one afternoon when business was slack, "but that sort of talk isn't nothin' but a fancy. Fellers lose, an' get gamin' they equal when the other feller takes the money, an' go yawpin' round tellin' how 'taint Christ an' just get money that I've always noticed when them same fellers win they haint nothin' to say about immorality, nor yet them fellers who lose, as they say, a man f'm an absorbin' other folk's money. Then same feller feelin's is hogwash, an' is never heard on, 'ceptin' 'm losers."

"The trouble with folks as don't understand poker is that most of 'em makes it up with gamblin', an' that's gettin' on the root in the matter. I always say, 'I say, 'that gamblin' is immoral. The Scriptures tell better than that. Fellers has a time I didn't get a fare lay-out for the back room, but I never seen no good reason for investin' money in immoral schemes of that nature, when poker has been provided by Providence as a means of improv'in' the human race without expense of risk to the proprietor of the place."

"That 'ere hardenin' of the heart talk, though, makes me sick. Just because a man takes money as has come to him, honest an' natural, in the course of a game, havin' won it proper, an' superlatively knowin' an' fair, an' an' the principles of poker, or maybe, by being capable enough to handle the cards so slick that the other players don't see what he's doin', other folks that ain't as capable as he is, breed dolefuls at him, an' call him a monster of greed. I've seen 'em talk up thinkin' an' gamblin' as a good thing, an' say it was a noble doin' a man to be a miser, an' a charitable act."

"Wherever I hear sich talk," and here the old man stopped for a moment and glared at Ben McAllister who had been complaining rather bitterly that afternoon of his ill luck the night before, "I always think of Sam Wilson that useter travel the river pretty steady about thirty-four year. He was one of the best players I ever knowed, an' a man, every inch of him. You never heard him whinny if he lost, though I don't remember ever seein' him lose more'n one or twice when he had a good hand. He was a steady, an' a good player, an' a combination of three players an' stood to show, so just naturally he ceshed in an' quit."

"Wilson was the quickest man with his weapons I ever saw, but he never drewed 'em 'thout it was really necessary. I never knowed him to kill a man, but once, an' that was when he was drawin' a knife on him, an' Sam shot him in the wrist, same as he usually did in such cases, but the feller was good ar' as I ever see, an' stood of givin' up as a man generally does when he's dropped his knife an' has his hand disarmed. He ceshed a little, but he never drewed his knife with his left hand, an' jumped at Wilson as quick as a cat, not losin' no time with his cusin'. Just naturally Wilson had to shoot again, an' this time he couldn't stop to aim for the wrist, an' so he plinked him through the heart."

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